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FOURTH GENERAL CONFERENCE.

Report of the Proceedings.

(Continued from Last Week's Issue.)

Also Report (No. 3) on the paper of J. H. Linn and others, as to the formation of a new Conference, to be composed of portions of the Kentucky and Virginia Conferences, recommending that such Conference be not formed at this time.

The Chair—This report, of course, lies on the table, as it contemplates a change in the Discipline.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON BOOKS AND PERIODICALS.

J. B. McFerrin, from the Committee on Books and Periodicals, submitted a report, (No. 2.) I. With reference to the claim of Mrs. Eliza V. Bascom, recommending that the whole matter be referred to the Book Agents.

II. The claim of Mrs. S. A. Latta, recommending that her claim be not allowed.

III. The claim of Thos. V. Brown, recommending that the same be not allowed.

IV. On the security of the Publishing House property, in accordance with the resolution of E. C. Slater and others, the Committee report—

1. That the deeds of the lands and buildings have all been duly made and recorded.

2. That the buildings are constructed in part with inflammable materials, and filled with inflammable matter; and owing to the contiguity of other buildings, they regard the establishment as liable to injury by fire.

3. That there is no insurance except on that part connected with the Bindery.

4. That the Book Agents have found it difficult to procure a policy.

The Committee recommend that the General Conference take steps for the better security of the property, either by making the buildings fire-proof, or by securing a reasonable policy of insurance.

J. H. Linn moved to take up the report.

A. L. P. Green—There are a good many papers in the hands of committees, and I move that it be laid on the table for the present.

The motion prevailed, and the report was laid on the table.

REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE ON REVISALS.

A. L. P. Green, from the Committee on Revisals, submitted a report (No. 1) on the prayer of the Quarterly Conference of King and Queen Circuit, Virginia Conference, recommending an alteration in the Discipline—striking out, and inserting to this effect: At each Quarterly Conference the preacher in charge shall read the names of those who are received into the Church, and also the names of those who are excluded therefrom; and shall give a general statement of the condition of his circuit, station, or mission.

2. The Committee do not recommend the striking out of the word, "expressly."

3. The Committee recommend that the first resolution from Prattville, Ala., be transferred to the Committee on Itinerancy.

4. That the second resolution from Prattville be transferred to the Committee on Temperance.

5. That the resolution of C. D. Oliver be transferred to the Committee on Sabbath Schools.

J. B. McFerrin moved to lay the report on the table, but did not press the motion.

The first resolution from Prattville was ordered to be transferred to the Committee on the Itinerancy.

The second paper from Prattville, asking for a rule of prohibition of the sale of intoxicating liquors, except for medicinal purposes, was referred to the Committee on Temperance.

A. L. P. Green—As to the other paper, I am perfectly willing that it should take the direction suggested by Bro. Marshall, and go to the Committee on Books and Periodicals.

C. D. Oliver—It was not designed to take the proposed book out of the Sabbath schools, but it was designed to be incorporated into our Sabbath school libraries. It was intended to embrace the history, ordinances, and discipline of the Church, touching probationers, class meetings, etc.

This paper was referred to the Committee on Books and Periodicals.

The Chair—The balance of the report having respect to a change of the Discipline, of course it lies on the table one day.

WASHINGTON CITY STATION.

C. D. Oliver, from the special committee appointed to consider the memorial from the Quarterly Meeting of the Washington City Station, Virginia Conference, submitted a favorable report in writing, which was read by the Secretary.

The committee to whom was referred the memorial of the Quarterly Conference of Washington City Station, Virginia Conference, having had the same under consideration, beg leave to present the following:

The interest in behalf of which your memorialists plead is one of the greatest importance to the Southern Church, and to the cause of true religion in the metropolis of the nation. This point needs no elaboration. Every member of this body must feel that so great and influential a denomination as the M. E. Church, South, should be represented by a large and flourishing society at the seat of the General Government.

The little band of Southern Methodists in Washington City have been, for the last eight years, manfully stemming the tide of opposition from the thousands in that city who hold connection with an avowedly abolition Church, and are served by the members of a Conference openly declared to be anti-slavery.

They might have suppressed their convictions of duty and remained in the Northern Church, but they could not sacrifice principle. They believed our Church to be right on the great question that severed us from the North, and nobly took their stand in the ranks of Southern Methodism.

Their ruin was predicted by those who made the wish father to the prophecy. Eight years

have passed away, and our Church there not only exists, but grows in numbers and influence.

They represent the M. E. Church, South, in the Federal City; and there, where crowds meet from all parts of the Union, "they have unfurled the banner and proclaimed the principles of Southern Methodism."

While these brethren are fully able to sustain themselves in their present place of worship as a station of the Virginia Conference, they feel persuaded that our cause there would be greatly promoted by having a more spacious edifice in a more eligible situation. We cannot do better than to repeat the language of your memorialists on this particular point: "We ought to have a more spacious building and a more convenient location. We need a large and better situated building, not, we repeat, for ourselves, but for the accommodation of the Southern Methodists who are here in crowds all the year, or the month during the session of Congress. With such an advantage, we are confident that we could enlarge the sphere of our operations to the material advancement of the sacred cause which we all hold so dear."

Your committee would also call the attention of the General Conference to the fact that all the leading denominations of the country are taking measures for the establishment of large and influential churches in the National Metropolis. The Protestant Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Baptists, and Northern Methodists have been making most strenuous efforts to increase their numbers and influence in the Federal City. All these Churches, with the exception, perhaps, of the Episcopal, have sent their agents far and wide through the North and South, soliciting funds for the purpose of building large and commodious houses of worship. Why should we be behind all other denominations in this respect? Our people are more numerous, quite as wealthy and as liberal as those of any other Church in Christendom, and we would fain believe that all that is needed to bring them to the support of this great enterprise, is to place it before them in its true bearings upon the religious interests of the hundreds of Southerners who annually congregate in the metropolis of the Union, and to show them the importance of being represented there by a Church worthy of the noble body of Christians whose great purpose is to spread Scriptural holiness over these lands without turning aside to make war upon the rights which we enjoy under the Constitution of a great and free people.

Your committee therefore recommend the adoption of the following resolutions:

1. Resolved, That we cordially recommend to the confidence and liberal patronage of the members and friends of our Church, the Agent that may be appointed to raise funds for the purpose of erecting a more spacious house of worship for the use of the M. E. Church, South, in Washington City.

2. Resolved, That we will give our hearty co-operation to the Agents whenever they may visit our fields of labor, and that we respectfully request all the preachers of our Church to do likewise.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

W. W. BENNETT.
C. D. OLIVER.
R. J. BOYD.

D. S. Doggett moved the adoption of the report as a whole. He hoped there would be no contrariety of opinion. He had been closely connected with that church for the last two years, and was fully prepared to indorse the statement of facts as well as the reasoning in the report. The request made in this case had peculiar merit. Similar requests had come up from individual churches. This rested on very different ground. The church was located in the great centre, the metropolis of the nation. The Southern Methodist Church ought to be represented in Washington in a respectable and efficient manner. It was not only the centre of influences going out over the country, but also the focus of influences coming in from every direction. It was the centre and focus not only of civil, but also of ecclesiastical and religious influences. The Conference was not asked to commit itself to any pecuniary responsibility; but only to encourage the enterprise, and sanction the appointment of an agent. There could certainly be no contrariety of opinion on this point. There was an interesting fact alluded to in the report: Other denominations have fine and spacious churches in Washington. This is notorious to all acquainted with the city. Our house of worship is small, and inconveniently and obscurely located. It is on no thoroughfare, but in a secluded place in the rear of the Patent Office. We desire a better location. It is our policy and duty to have a church near Pennsylvania Avenue, where it may be seen and accessible. This appeal is grounded further on the fact that our society there is comparatively a feeble one. Never was there a truer set of Southern Methodists; but the number is small. In the division of the Church, only a few adhered to the South. The vastly overwhelming influence of Methodism is against us. It is necessary that the Church South take a general interest in the work; and, indeed, she has a general interest, from the fact that it is the national metropolis. Throughout the greater part of the year, there is a continual stream of travel through the city. Multitudes would attend our church, had we suitable conveniences, who now go elsewhere for worship. We want not a splendid church, but a spacious and commodious one, properly located. I know not what the views of brethren may be. If I could anticipate objections, I would proceed at greater length. The Conference may feel assured nothing is contemplated in this movement but the interest of the Church.

Bishop Soule—I have but few words to say. I perfectly approve the report of that committee. I feel deeply the importance of the subject. I deem it vastly important that we should have such a house of worship in the metropolis of the United States. It unnecessary to enlarge. I

should have been glad if there had been a suggestion in the report, that we set an example to our people that should give additional weight and influence to this resolution. I should be glad to see a respectable subscription from this body to that object, because it would give great weight to your action in the case. What is it for us to raise upon the spot—shall I say one thousand dollars? We may raise two thousand. This would give great weight to the resolution with our people.

The report was adopted and ordered for publication.

On motion of J. B. McFerrin, F. S. Petway, reserve from Tennessee Conference, was recognized in place of S. D. Baldwin, who was absent, being engaged in a revival in Memphis.

Bishop Kavanaugh now took the chair, and called up the order of the day for ten o'clock—the appeal of James Maclean from the action of the Mississippi Conference. The appellant concluded his defence; B. M. Drake responded in behalf of the Mississippi Conference; the vote was taken, and the decision of the Mississippi Conference in the case was reversed.

L. Campbell asked leave of absence for B. M. Drake till Monday next, which was granted.

E. H. Myers read the report of the Publishing Committee of the Southern Christian Advocate, which was referred to the Committee on Books and Periodicals.

A. L. P. Green presented a paper from Thos. O. Summers, on the revision of the Discipline, which he wished referred to the Committee on Revisals. It was referred unread.

The Bishop announced the committee on the memorial from Pacific Conference, as follows: J. Hamilton, J. E. Evans, L. D. Huston, J. W. Kelly, S. Field, R. Alexander, F. A. Morris, W. R. Branham, W. G. Caples.

Appointments were now given out, and Conference adjourned with the benediction from the chair.

SATURDAY, May 8.

Conference opened at the usual hour, with Bishop Andrew in the chair.

The devotional exercises were conducted by J. H. Linn.

The Minutes of yesterday were read and approved.

PRESIDING ELDERSHIP.

The Chair announced the order for the presentation of petitions and memorials, and directed the Secretary to call the Conferences for that purpose.

G. W. Carter, from the Virginia Conference, presented a petition from Portsmouth, praying for some modification in the Presiding Eldership, and moved that, without reading, it be referred to the Committee on Revisals.

It was so referred.

A. L. P. Green—I do not know what the contents of that paper may be, but it seems to me, from its title that it ought to go to the Committee on Itinerancy; and, therefore, he moved a reconsideration of this vote, which was agreed to, and then the paper was referred to the Committee on the Itinerancy.

EDITORIAL MANAGEMENT.

S. Kelley, from the Western Virginia Conference, presented a paper signed by S. Kelley, A. H. Redford, and G. W. Langhorne, submitting an additional section for the regulation of the editorial corps; which was read.

The Chair—Is it the intention to inquire into the propriety of the matter submitted?

S. Kelley—I consent to that change in the phraseology. I ask that it be referred to the Committee on Revisals.

(A point of order being raised, at the request of the President the paper was withheld.)

NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE BOUNDARY.

G. W. Carter, from the Virginia Conference, presented a paper, signed by Beaufort, Bell, and Sutton, asking for a transfer of certain territory from the jurisdiction of the North Carolina to the Virginia Conference, and moved that, without reading, the memorial be referred to the Committee on Boundaries.

It was so referred.

He also presented a memorial from certain members of the Clarksville and Henderson Circuit, of the North Carolina Conference, praying for the transfer of that Circuit to the Virginia Conference; which, without reading, was referred to the same committee.

D. B. Nicholson presented a similar paper from the same circuit; which was referred, unread, to the same committee.

R. T. Heflin presented five counter memorials from the same circuit, protesting against said transfer; all which were referred, unread, to the same committee.

James Stacy offered a memorial from the Publishing Committee of the Southern Christian Advocate, at Charleston, highly commending its editorial management for the last four years, and respectfully soliciting the re-appointment of E. H. Myers as editor.

In accordance with the wishes of the offerer, it was laid on the table for the present.

W. A. Gamewell presented a memorial from the Methodist Church in Columbia, South Carolina, asking for the next General Conference to be held in that city; which was laid on the table for the present.

A memorial from the citizens of Gerard, praying that they be taken into the Georgia Conference, was presented and referred, unread, to the Committee on Boundaries.

J. E. Evans presented a resolution adopted by the last Georgia Conference, advising that the Quarterly Review and the Home Circle be merged into one periodical of high order, or the Quarterly discontinued; which was referred to the Committee on Books and Periodicals.

T. J. Koger presented a memorial from Columbus, Mississippi, in the Alabama Conference, praying that the next General Conference be held

in that place; which was laid on the table for the present.

H. C. Thweatt presented a paper from Asbury Davidson, of Texas, praying for some modification in the plan of Episcopal visitation; which was referred, unread, to the Committee on Episcopacy.

H. N. McTyeire presented the following; which was referred to the Committee on Books and Periodicals:

Resolved, That the Louisiana Conference do highly approve of the able manner in which Dr. Doggett has edited the Southern Methodist Quarterly Review; but that, in view of the financial exhibit of the Agents, we recommend the General Conference to unite the office of Editor of the Quarterly Review and Book Editor.

D. B. Nicholson presented a resolution, recommending a change in the Discipline concerning Episcopal decisions of law, and their publication; which was referred to the Committee on Revisals.

L. M. Lee presented petitions from Patrick Circuit, Danville District, North Carolina Conference, praying for a transfer to the Virginia Conference; which were referred, unread, to the Committee on Boundaries.

J. B. Payne presented the following:

Resolved, That after Wednesday next the General Conference receive no more memorials, petitions, or applications for change of the Discipline.

An amendment was moved, substituting Monday for Wednesday.

J. Hamilton hoped that the door would be left open. If the resolution were adopted, it would have to be suspended again and again.

On motion, the resolution was laid on the table.

L. Pierce offered a resolution contemplating the improvement of the rule on the reception of members into the Church, so as to obviate a popular difficulty.

R. Abbey and Levi Pearce, the agents appointed by the last General Conference to manage the interest of the Church in the Van Houten bequest, made their report; which, on motion of E. Stevenson, referred to the Committee on Books and Periodicals.

F. E. Pitts presented a resolution, requesting the Rev. Dr. Kelly, late of the China Mission, at some convenient time to address the General Conference on the condition and prospects of the missions in China.

C. K. Marshall moved an amendment, substituting McKendree Church for the Conference room, in order that the citizens of Nashville, as well as the Conference, might enjoy the benefit.

N. H. D. Wilson and N. F. Reid offered a resolution calling for the publication, in convenient form, of such Episcopal decisions, delivered during the last four years, as have been approved by the whole College of Bishops.

H. N. McTyeire moved an amendment: That the College of Bishops furnish to this Conference, or to the Episcopal Committee, a list or record of the decisions on which they have agreed; and that such record be revised or affirmed, and then published in book form.

N. H. D. Wilson—I have no objection to the amendment.

N. F. Reid—I would call attention to the law as recorded in the Discipline. Whatever was the intention of the General Conference at the time this law was made, it certainly is laid down here that the decision of the Bishop is the law of the Church; that each Bishop shall report to the Bench the decisions he has made, and that such decisions, when approved by the College of Bishops, shall be recorded in permanent form, and published, and so shall be authoritative in administration, etc. Now, if this General Conference should decide that these decisions are not the law until they are passed upon by the General Conference, it is necessary that the Conference should say so. As the law now stands, it is evident that the Bishops' decisions are final; and it was in this view of the law that that resolution has been drawn.

G. W. Carter proposed a substitute for the amended resolution, in these words:

Resolved, That a Select Committee be appointed to prepare, as soon as practicable, for publication in permanent form by the Book Agents, an Ecclesiastical Digest, to embrace, first, all the Judicial Decisions and Reports of the several General Conferences since the year 1812, to the time of publication. Secondly, the Decisions of the College of Bishops on Exceptions taken by the Annual Conferences subsequently to the General Conference of 1854.

The resolution was signed by G. W. Carter and W. W. Bennett.

G. W. Carter—I suppose the object is to secure an authoritative construction of the law. I think that, as the General Conferences have given so many more and fuller decisions than the College of Bishops, we shall gain our object more completely by publishing the Conference decisions since the year 1812, and those of the Bishops since 1854. The decisions of the College of Bishops are of two classes: on exceptions taken by the Annual Conferences, and those taken by the General Conferences. I propose to include only the former, which are final. I propose to publish this Digest at any time subsequently to the adjournment of the Conference; and if Dr. Summers should continue to sustain the same relation to the Church after the adjournment of this Conference that he does now, I intend to propose to fill the blank with his name.

H. N. McTyeire—I think Brother Carter will agree with the mover and the amender of the resolution, and with me, that this proposition is not intended merely to secure a compilation of authoritative decisions, but to secure uniformity of decisions and administrations. For example, I happened to be in General Conference when this state of things came out: A case occurred in the Tennessee Conference, and the Bishop's decision was given upon it. At the same time, in the State of Georgia, perhaps, a similar case came up, and the Bishops there gave

exactly an opposite opinion. I say the thing is possible. These opinions are published in the papers. The Presiding Elder in Tennessee, or the preacher administering the law under the decision in Tennessee, is met in the papers with the decision in Georgia exactly the reverse of that in his own State. This leads, of course, to confusion in the law. Hence it is proposed to be provided by this clause, that no Episcopal decision shall be authoritative, (except in cases of appointment); nor shall any such decision be published until it shall have been approved by the College of Bishops. It is also proposed to provide that each Bishop shall report in writing all his decisions to the Board; such decisions as he may have made subsequently to the last preceding meeting. And all such decisions of the Bishops, when approved by the College, shall be either recorded in permanent form, or published, as the Bishops shall direct; and when so approved and published, shall be authoritative. That is my understanding of this clause; and so I think the framer understands it. Such decisions shall be authoritative until the next meeting of the General Conference, or until the Conference shall otherwise decide. For of course it is not meant to take out of the hands of this body the final determination of the laws which they make. All opinions and all constructions are amenable to revision here. The Bishops' decision does not make up the law in its highest sense until the body that makes the law has given it its construction. I do not think there is any taking away of the Bishops' prerogatives by this proposition.

W. J. Parks—We are compelled to conform to the Bishops' decision till the next sitting of this body; although it may chance that I could find a decision on an appeal of the Georgia Conference which might be excepted to by the Episcopal Committee here, and the law be construed otherwise; and I think I could now fix my eye on such a point. It seems to me this doctrine is correct, that all decisions should pass in revision here. Even if no exception is taken, it is not law, and cannot be, without the endorsement of this body; because otherwise the Bishops might send out a book which a committee here might report was not the law. After the General Conference have approved of your decision, sir, then let it go out as the law of the Church.

A. L. P. Green—I think, sir, we had probably better let this matter alone, just as it is. I think we may embarrass more than help this matter by any effort we are likely to make now to improve it. For, at present, if the Annual Conference and the Bishop should disagree with regard to the interpretation of a law, the Annual Conference has a right to appeal to the Bench of Bishops, where the Annual Conference can make a controversy and be fully heard as between themselves and the Bishop presiding. When the case is carried to the Bench of Bishops, and they decide it, I am compelled to regard the decision as final, allowing that there should be no change in the law as it now stands. But I hold, further, that, after all, we have it in our power to change the law itself, and get clear of both the law and the interpretation, if we see cause. We must have the power lodged somewhere to decide what the law is. But this matter ought to be managed with caution. I would not have the Bishops to construe the whole law without submission to the General Conference.

W. A. Smith, of Virginia—Is the resolution, as amended by Bro. McTyeire, before the house?

The Chair—The question is on the adoption of the substitute of Bro. Carter.

W. A. Smith—I am in favor of the original resolution, though perhaps I should not be opposed to Bro. Carter's substitute. I must say, however, that it does not appear to me to be properly a substitute for the motion before the house. It does not seem to propose the accomplishment of the same object. If it proposed the accomplishment of the same object by a different process, it would then be a substitute. But it does not propose this. I am not in favor of ruling out or displacing Bro. McTyeire's proposition for Bro. Carter's.

In regard to the substitute, upon its merits, that is a very different question. With regard to the proposition simply for the publication of decisions, if these decisions are to embrace only mere abstract questions, they can be of no practical utility. Of what utility would be the report of a decision even of the Supreme Court of the United States, embracing only some abstract question of law, without setting forth the case on which the question of law arose? Such a report would not be worth the paper. I think, therefore, that, in these decisions, they ought to state all the circumstances of the case on which the point of law arose; and so the report might become important not only as a matter of law, but as a matter of history. I hope Bro. Carter will withdraw his paper, and let us act upon the original resolution.

The phraseology of the Discipline in the answer to a question on page 49, with regard to a Court of Errors, is left open to various constructions. One party may allege that the Bishops have final jurisdiction; and another party (which I think more orthodox) may assert that they are not a Court of Errors, with authority to make final decisions; but that the only final Court of Errors is the General Conference. I understand that this subject has been referred to the Episcopal Committee. "It is certainly important that we should have the report of the College of Bishops, and their decisions of cases to which exceptions have been taken in the last four years; and the amendment proposed by Bro. Tyeire calls for this. It is necessary to perfect the law in regard to conflicting decisions. I trust, therefore, that Bro. Carter will allow us to come directly to the object we have in view; and, at the proper time, I think I shall be ready to vote for his resolution.

G. W. Carter—I have no objection, and will withdraw the substitute, if I can be allowed to make an explanation. I did not, in offering the resolution, propose to discuss the wisdom of the

present law. I admit that there is ambiguity in the law. Without attempting to decide or settle anything, I sought to accord the resolution with the law, as I understood it. I contemplated the same object with the movers of the original proposition; but desired to make it more comprehensive. I wished to embrace the decisions of the General Conference as well as those of the Episcopal Board. I still doubt the wisdom of leaving them out, and cannot see any reason for so doing, unless it were absurdly taken upon the principle that they are not worth publishing. The Discipline already makes it the duty of the Bishops either to publish or record in permanent form the decisions referred to. I withdraw the substitute.

A. L. P. Green—I think, sir, that there is more in this than we see at the first blush. Suppose the resolution of Bro. Wilson should prevail. Suppose it were to pass, and the book be produced as therein indicated, and pass into the hands of the preachers. We will, from that day, have two books of law—one, the Discipline; the other, the Traditions of the Fathers. And then, when we have occasion to alter or amend the Discipline, we must revise both the Discipline and the Book of Decisions and Constructions.

N. F. Reid—I understand, sir, that the Discipline of the Church is the constitution of the Church. I understand that this body is the legislative department of the Church, and that the College of Bishops is the judiciary of the Church. I understand that the Bishops are the interpreters of the law. I would like to have this question settled, whether or not the Bishops are to interpret and expound the law, or whether this body have a right both to legislate and to interpret. Of what account are the decisions of the Bishops, if they are not the authorized interpreters of the law? I think, sir, it is high time this question were settled, and that it ought to be settled now, if it is competent for this body to settle it.

N. H. D. Wilson—I do not wish to consume time, but as I was the original mover of the resolution, it is proper that I should say a few words. My proposition was to make public, in what I considered the proper way, the decisions of law made by our Bishops. I did not intend to involve the question as to whether their decisions were final, or whether this Conference must pass upon their decisions before they can be regarded as authoritative. I have no objection, however, to that question coming up now, since it has been intimated that it must and will come. It has been said by Dr. Green, that we will have two codes of law. I have no objections to the traditions of the fathers, provided they are kept in their place. I feel that these decisions are authoritative, and of the utmost importance to the ministry. In attempting to administer the law of the Church, many of us have but little experience; and when questions of difficulty come up, we are anxious to turn our eyes towards these cases of adjudication of the law that will give us help. How often is it the case that presiding elders are called upon to settle questions precisely similar to those which come before the bishops, and who are not familiar with the decisions and laws of the Church! My object is to know where we may receive this assistance. The preachers, as exponents of the law, need the same help, and ought to have it. What is the necessity of deciding grave questions of law, and passing those decisions under solemn revision here, if they are not to be preserved for the direction of those living under the law, and those who are to administer it? Certainly, sir, we ought to have access to these decisions. We now consult Baker and Hedding on questions connected with the construction of the Discipline. But I want to be enabled, by this proposition to reach the later decisions of Bishop Soule, Bishop Capers, Bishop Andrew, Bishop Paine, Bishop Pierce, Bishop Early, and Bishop Kavanaugh; and, if you choose, even the decisions of this General Conference. My object is to make these decisions public, whenever they become the settled law of the Church.

W. Closs—Bishops, like other men, are liable to take different views, and come to diverse conclusions. And the consequence is that, in the Church papers, we sometimes find conflicting decisions by the Bishops. So that, administering the law, we might administer either of two ways and be right. In order to prevent the difficulty in which we found ourselves four years ago, an amendment of the law with reference to these points of conflict was attempted; I say attempted, because I do not know that it really was an amendment which we then adopted. Our difficulty then was, the too hurried publication of our decisions—especially those in conflict with each other—which left those who had to administer the Discipline in their pastoral charges uncertain what the law of the Church was. The object of the amendment was to prevent these hurried publications; so that when the Bishops made a decision, no publication should be made of it until he could confer with the Board of Bishops, and they should confirm it; then the decision was to be published as the law of the Church. The difficulty since the adoption of this law is, that we have not been able to get the publication of any decision at all, and pastors have been unable to ascertain what the interpretation of the law, as confirmed by the Bench of Bishops, really is. The object is to get a publication, so that we may know what the proper authorities have decided. Whatever the decision is, let us know it, that we may be governed by it.

J. W. Glenn here made an ineffectual motion to indefinitely postpone the subject.

J. B. McFerrin—I have no objection, Mr. President, to a full and fair discussion of this question at a proper time; but we have been told already, by a member of the Committee on the Episcopacy, that this subject was before that committee. I therefore move the reference of this paper to the Committee on the Episcopacy.

(Concluded on Fourth Page.)